DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 301 104 HE 021 941

TITLE College Student Employment: Patterns and Profiles. Maryland Longitudinal Study Research Highlights. Research Report 7.
INSTITUTION Maryland Univ., College Park. Maryland Longitudinal Study Steering Committee.
PUB DATE 88
NOTE 11p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Academic Achievement; *Academic Persistence; *Black Students; *College Students; Commuting Students; Higher Education; Longitudinal Studies; On Campus Students; Part Time Employment; Racial Differences; Sex Differences; State Universities; Student Attrition; Student Behavior; Student Characteristics; *Student Employment
IDENTIFIERS *University of Maryland College Park

ABSTRACT

As part of the Maryland Longitudinal Study of 772 students entering the University of Maryland, College Park (UMCP) in the fall of 1980, a study was conducted to determine patterns of college student employment and profiles of students in different employment categories. Findings included the following: (1) approximately 40% of students were employed in their freshman year, increasing to 75% by the fourth year, with the greatest increase in part-time employment on campus; (2) in the Representative Group (i.e., students in the 1980 freshman class who were selected through random sampling techniques and who agreed to participate), males were more likely to hold jobs than females throughout the 4 years, and employed males were more likely to work part-time off campus than employed females; (3) in the Black Group (all Black students in the 1980 freshman class who agreed to participate), such sex differences were not found; (4) in the Representative Group, commuters were more likely than campus residents to be employed, while in the Black Group, commuters were less likely to be employed; (5) unemployed students in the Representative Group earned higher grade point averages in the first 2 years than employed students, but this difference disappeared after the second year; (6) in the Black Group, students in all employment categories had grade point averages less than 2.0, but in year 2 they were above 2.0, although this increase declined later in the year for black students employed full-time off campus; and (7) each year in the Representative Group, a greater proportion of students working part-time on campus (rather than working off campus or unemployed) returned the following year. Implications of the results and suggestions for actions to assist working students are discussed. Data are presented in several tables and an appendix. Contains 4 references. (KM)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED301104

MLS RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

Maryland Longitudinal Study

RESEARCH REPORT #7

COLLEGE STUDENT EMPLOYMENT: PATTERNS AND PROFILES

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Division of Student Affairs, University of Maryland
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The present report is one of a series of research reports based on information collected by the Maryland Longitudinal Study (MLS) from over 700 students entering The University of Maryland College Park as freshmen in the fall of 1980. The intent of this, and other MLS research reports, is to confront an issue of importance to the University community; to explore the information provided by MLS participants related to that issue; and to share our findings with members of the University community.

The issue explored in the present report is college student employment. An effort was made both to determine patterns of college student employment demonstrated by students as they progress toward their undergraduate degree at UMCP, and to distinguish profiles of students in different employment categories. These patterns and profiles are summarized below.

The likelihood of a student having part-time (up to 20 hours a week) or full-time (more than 20 hours per week) employment increased as students progressed through their academic program. Approximately 40% of the students studied were employed their freshman year. By the fourth year, approximately 75% of the students studied were employed. The college student employment category with the greatest increase over time was part-time employment on campus.

In the Representative Group (i.e., students in the incoming freshman class of fall 1980 who were selected through random sampling techniques and who agreed to participate in the study), males were more likely than females to hold jobs during their first two years of college. Throughout the four years college student employment was studied, over half of the males in the Representative Group were employed either part-time or full-time. Less than half of the females in the Representative Group had employment the first two years of the study; however, by the third year over half of the females were employed. Employed males were most likely to work part-time off campus, while with time, employed females were more likely to work part-time on campus.

No such sex differences in employment patterns were evident in the Black Group (i.e., all black incoming freshmen in fall of 1980 who agreed to participate in the study). Less than half the black students (male and female) were employed during their freshman year. Over the years of the study there was a slow increase in the proportion of students with employment. By the fourth year, 8 of 10 black male and female students were employed. Among employed students in the Black Group, females were most likely to have on-campus jobs, while no clear pattern of work site was evident for males.

In the Representative Group, commuters were more likely than campus residents to be employed while at UMCP. However, in the Black Group, commuters were less likely than campus residents to be employed.

On-campus jobs were more likely to be held by residents and off-campus jobs by commuters.

There was a decrease over time in the number of students employed *on campus* who reported minimal involvement with their employer, their fellow employees, and/or with the work itself. However, the number of students who reported minimal involvement in their work experience during their first or second year was high enough to warrant concern.

Students in the Representative Group who were unemployed earned higher grade point averages their first two years at UMCP than students who were employed. After the second year, this difference disappeared. In the Black Group, while unemployed students earned higher GPAs than students who were employed their freshman year, the GPAs of students in all four employment categories (part-time on campus, part-time off campus, full-time off campus, unemployed) were less than 2.0, the minimum needed to graduate. By the fall semester of Year Two of the study, the GPAs for all employment categories were above 2.0. However, spring semester in Year Two was particularly critical for black students employed full-time off campus. Their GPAs fell below 2.0, and grade point recovery did not occur until three semesters later.

Maryland Longitudinal Study Steering Committee
Division of Student Affairs
The University of Maryland College Park
Winter 1988

© 1988

HE 021 941

Students who were unemployed typically made faster progress through their academic program than did students who were employed. However, all groups *attempted* more credit hours than they *earned* each semester. The amount of this discrepancy decreased over time.

Evidence of a relationship between employment site and retention existed for the Representative Group. Each year, a greater proportion of students working part-time on campus (as opposed to working off campus or being unemployed) returned to UMCP the following year. A similar relationship between on-campus employment and retention was not as clear for the Black Group. This may be partially explained by the smaller numbers in each employment category in the Black Group.

Evidence offered in this report indicates that there are large numbers of college students at UMCP who are employed and that the numbers increase as students progress through their academic program. The suggestion is made, given the relationship between on-campus employment and retention, that the University should make a concerted effort not only to create and advertise on-campus jobs but to insure work environments which stimulate students' involvement in the work experience, and hence—directly or indirectly—in their educational experience.

Further, this report suggests there is a need for members of the University community to help students who are employed achieve a better balance between the demands of their jobs and their academic work in order to insure a steady progression through their academic program.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION 3
A. The purpose of this report 3
B. The Maryland Longitudinal Study 3
C. Definitions of college student employment categories 3
II. DISCUSSION 3
Question 1. What is the extent of part-time and full-time employment among students at UMCP? 3
Question 2. Do male and female students have similar employment patterns in terms of hours employed per week and work site (on/off campus)? 4
Question 3. Are students who are employed more likely to be residents, or commuters? 4
Question 4. Are on-campus jobs more likely to be held by resident students, and off-campus jobs by commuters? 5
Question 5. How involved are students who work on campus with their work experience? 5
Question 6. Is there a relationship between students' employment status and their academic performance? 5
Question 7. Is there a relationship between students' employment status and their progression through their academic program? 6
Question 8. Is there a relationship between the location of students' employment and retention? 6
III. SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS 7
IV. CONCLUSION 9
END NOTE 9
APPENDIX A 10
REFERENCES 10

COLLEGE STUDENT EMPLOYMENT: PATTERNS AND PROFILES

I. INTRODUCTION

A. THE PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

A steadily rising standard of living has made education beyond high school a desirable and increasingly attainable goal. In addition to the impact of the college experience on a student's educational, social, and personal development, there are financial benefits gained by earning a baccalaureate degree. For example, it has been stated by the Secretary of Education that college graduates will earn an average of $600,000 more over their lifetime than nongraduates (*The Washington Post*, 1/8/87, p. A19).

The process of obtaining the baccalaureate degree, however, is an expensive one for students. Some students are able to rely heavily on their family for financial support during their college years. Those who cannot or choose not to must find other sources of funding, such as loans, scholarships, grants, employment, or some combination of these.

Few would argue that the experience of being employed can satisfy financial needs, enhance self-development, and result in social or community contribution. As college becomes more attainable *and* expensive, the impact of work on the collegiate experience must be evaluated.

Students employed *on-campus* have found that, in addition to earning money to help in the funding of their education, an on-campus job may have additional benefits as well. For example, a job on campus can provide a means of becoming acquainted with other students beyond the classroom setting. An on-campus job can be a means of learning about the physical and administrative structure of the campus. It can provide a place for students to go between classes on a consistent basis. This is a particular benefit for commuting students who cannot return to a dorm room between classes, and yet who may prefer to study evenings or in a specific place off campus. Finally, and very importantly, having an on-campus job helps students build a network of on-campus support persons.

The purpose of this report is to provide members of the University community with information about the extent of college student employment among students at UMCP and about some of the issues related to being employed as a student.

Section II of this report focuses on the following eight questions:

1. What is the extent of part-time and full-time employment among students at UMCP each year?

2. Do male and female students at UMCP have similar employment patterns in terms of hours of employment per week, and work site (on/off campus)?

3. Are students who are employed more likely to be residents or commuters?

4. Are on-campus jobs more likely to be held by resident students, and off-campus jobs by commuters?

5. How involved are students who worked on campus with their work experience?

6. Is there a relationship between students' employment status and their academic performance?

7. Is there a relationship between students' employment status and their progression through their degree program?

8. Is there a relationship between the location of students' employment and retention?

First, however, it is appropriate to offer the reader a brief introduction to the Maryland Longitudinal Study, and then provide operational definitions of the college student employment categories used in this report.

B. THE MARYLAND LONGITUDINAL STUDY

The Maryland Longitudinal Study (MLS) is a five year study of 772 individuals who entered UMCP as first semester freshmen in the fall of 1980. For a complete description of the study, its purpose, goals, features, participants, and design, please refer to MLS Research Report #1: **A DESCRIPTIVE OVERVIEW**[1].

The 772 participants are treated as two groups. The Representative Group was identified through random sampling techniques, and is comprised of 468 students. It is important to keep in mind that this Representative Group is not a "white" sample; rather, it reflects the ethnic diversity of the student body at UMCP.

The Black Group is comprised of *all* black students in the entering class of 1980 who agreed to participate in the study (n = 339). For the purpose of analysis, therefore, data from black students included in the Representative Group (n = 35) were also included in the Black Group.

As in other MLS research reports, the population discussed in this report is *not* the entire initial population of participants. **Only MLS participants who were enrolled at UMCP in a given year were studied for this report.** Therefore, the numbers each year are variable and are affected by missing data. In other words, UMCP student participants with missing data concerning work site and/or number of hours of employment per week, were not included in the data analysis for that year.

C. DEFINITIONS OF COLLEGE STUDENT EMPLOYMENT CATEGORIES

There are four categories of college student employment defined in this report, based on work site (on/off campus) and hours of employment per week. Each year, MLS participants who were enrolled at UMCP were classified in one of the following employment categories:

a. *employed part-time on campus:* a student who reported working on campus, as part of a federally sponsored work study program, at other on-campus work, or for college credit as part of a department program, for **up to 20 hours per week** during a given academic year;

b. *employed part-time off campus:* a student who reported working off campus for **up to 20 hours per week** during a given academic year;

c. *employed full-time off campus:* a student who reported working off campus for **more than 20 hours per week** during a given academic year;

d. *unemployed:* a student who reported zero hours of employment during a given academic year.

II. DISCUSSION

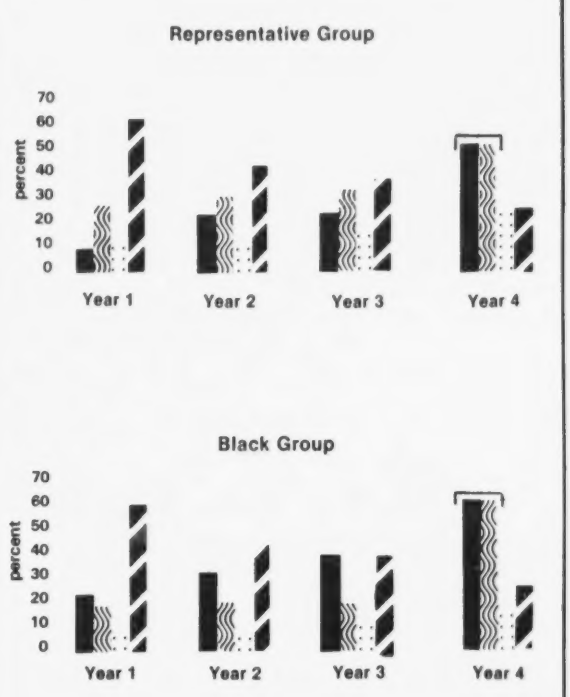
Question 1. What is the extent of part-time and full-time employment among students at UMCP?

Representative Group

Figure 1 presents the percent of UMCP students included in each employment category for the Representative Group. The figure shows that with time, the likelihood that a student would have a part-time or full-time job while going to school increased. The percent of students in the Representative Group who were employed increased from 40% in Year One to 76% in Year Four. The employment category with the greatest increase in percentage over time was "employed part-time on campus," which increased from 6% of the students in Year One, to 22% in Year Three. (Note: Work site for part-time employment was not determined in Year Four of the study.) The proportion of students employed off campus part-time or full-time was fairly steady for the first three years of the study, as can be seen in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1.

Percent Across College Student Employment Categories



Note: Work site for part time employment was not determined in Year 4.

EMPLOYMENT CATEGORY

- Part Time On Campus
- Part Time Off Campus
- Full Time Off Campus
- Unemployed

Black Group

Figure 1 also presents the percent of black students at UMCP included in each employment category for Years One through Four of the study. Employment patterns for the Black Group are similar to those seen for the Representative Group. The likelihood of a black student working part-time or full-time while going to school increased with time. In Year One, 41% of the students studied were employed. This rate increased to 58% in Year Two, and to 64% in Year Three. By Year Four, only about one out of every four students (24%) was unemployed.

The proportion of students working part-time or full-time off campus remained fairly steady over time; the proportion of students working part-time on campus increased from 22% in Year One, to 33% in Year Two, to 38% in Year Three.

Question 2. Do male and female college students have similar employment patterns in terms of hours employed per week and work site (on/off campus)?

Representative Group

The longitudinal patterns of employment differ for males and females in the Representative Group. The pattern of employment was steady among males in the Representative Group. Approximately 6 of 10 male students in the Representative Group were employed their freshman year. That proportion increased only slightly in Years Two (62%) and Three (63%) of the study. In Year Four the proportion of employed males increased to approximately 7 out of 10. Only 17% of the males studied in the Representative Group were not employed at any period during their first three academic years at UMCP.

A similar pattern of employment over four years of the study is not evident among females in the Representative Group. The proportion of female students who had jobs their freshman year was considerably lower than that of males. Slightly over three in ten (31%) of the the female students studied were employed their first year. The rate increased to 45% in Year Two; and to 67% in Year Three. In Year Four the proportion of employed females (79%) was greater than the proportion of employed males. A slightly higher percent (19%) of females than of males were not employed at any period during their first three academic years at UMCP.

Black Group

The pattern of employment of black male students was similar to that of black female students. Approximately 4 of 10 black students were employed their freshman year at UMCP; this rate increased to approximately 6 in 10 in Years Two and Three; and to almost 8 in 10 in Year Four. More black females than black males were not employed during any period of their first three academic years at UMCP: 17% of the black males studied and 24% of the black females studied did not hold jobs during that time.

Question 3. Are students who are employed more likely to be residents, or commuters?

Representative Group

Students in the Representative Group who were employed either part-time or full-time were more likely to be commuters than campus residents. Seventy-eight percent (78%) of the students who were employed their first semester were commuters. This rate decreased to 65% the second semester of their freshman year. In

Year Two, 57% of the employed students were commuters; in Year Three the rate was 65%. Seventy-two percent (72%) of the students who were employed in Year Four were commuters.

Black Group

In the Black Group, students who were employed either part-time or full-time were generally less likely to be commuters than campus residents. In the first semester of the freshman year, 49% of the employed black students were commuters; by the second semester this percent had decreased to 38%. In Year Two the rate was 35% and in Year Three it was 56%. In Year Four, the percent of employed black students who were commuters was 45%.

Question 4. Are on-campus jobs more likely to be held by resident students, and off-campus jobs by commuters?

Representative Group

A student who had a part-time job on campus was somewhat more likely to live on campus than off campus. Fifty-six percent of the students working part-time on campus the first semester of their freshman year lived on campus as well; this rate increased to 74% in the spring semester. In Year Two, 66% of the students employed part-time on campus lived on campus. In Year Three the proportion decreased to 55%. Students were not asked in Year Four whether their part-time jobs were on or off campus, so no distinction by work site can be made.

The proportion of students holding part-time jobs off campus who lived off campus as well in Year One was 84% in the first semester. This proportion decreased to 69% in the second semester. In Year Two, the proportion of students working part-time off campus and commuting to UMCP was 63%. In Year Three nearly 3 of every 4 students (74%) with part-time jobs off campus were commuters.

Very few students in the Representative Group who worked full-time off campus lived on campus, particularly during the first three years of college: 3% in the fall semester of Year One; 13% in the spring semester of Year One; 4% in Year Two; and a jump to 22% in Year Three.

Black Group

Black students who held jobs on campus were far more likely to live on campus than off campus, particularly in the first two years at college: 75% in the fall semester of Year One and 90% in the spring semester; 85% in Year Two, and 58% in Year Three.

The proportion of black students holding part-time jobs off campus who lived off campus decreased from 77% in the first semester of the freshman year to 65% in the spring. The rate further decreased in Year Two to 60%. In Year Three nearly 3 of 4 black students (74%) with off campus part-time employment were commuters.

There was a much higher proportion of students working full-time (i.e., more than 20 hours a week) off campus and living on campus among the Black Group than among the Representative Group, particularly in Year Two. Twenty-eight percent (28%) of the black students who worked full-time off campus their first semester lived on campus. This rate decreased slightly to 22% in the spring semester. However, in Year Two, the rate of black students holding full-time jobs off campus who were campus residents rose to 30%. It then decreased somewhat in Year Three to 20%, a rate similar to that seen in the Representative Group in Year Three.

Question 5. How involved are students who work *on campus* with their work experience?

In order to ascertain what students who were employed were gaining from their work experience besides a paycheck, employed students were asked the degree of their involvement in their work experience, in Years One, Two, and Three of the study. "Involvement in their work experience" meant involvement with their employer, fellow employees, and/or the work itself. Students were asked to indicate which of five responses reflected their degree of involvement: not at all involved; slightly involved; somewhat involved; much involved; very much involved.

Representative Group

Looking only at students with on-campus employment, nearly 1 in 3 students employed on campus their freshman year (30%) reported minimal (none or slight) involvement in their work experience. This percent decreased in Year Two, when 16% reported minimal involvement in their work experience. By Year Three, the percent of students working on campus who reported minimal involvement in their work experience was only 5%.

Black Group

Black students who worked on campus their freshman year were more likely than students in the Representative Group to report being involved in their work experience. Twenty-two percent (22%) of the students in the Black Group who worked on campus reported minimal involvement with either their employer, their fellow employees, or the work itself. In Year Two, the rate of black students reporting minimal involvement in their on-campus work experience was down to 17%. By Year Three, the percent of black students working on campus who reported minimal involvement with their employer, fellow students, or the work itself was 12%, a higher percent than that seen in the Representative Group (5%).

Question 6. Is there a relationship between students' employment status and their academic performance?

Representative Group

While the semester grade point average across student employment categories was above 2.00 for students in the Representative Group for the four years in which student employment was studied, students who were unemployed earned a higher grade point average than did students who had part-time or full-time jobs. As can be seen in Table 1, this pattern holds true for Years One through Three of the study.

Students working part-time off campus had a higher GPA than those working part-time on campus or full-time off campus, for the first three semesters. By the spring semester of Year Two, however, the GPA of students employed part-time on or off campus was virtually the same. After the first three semesters, the GPA of students working full-time while going to college did not seem to be greatly jeopardized by their full-time employment (defined in this study as employed for more than 20 hours per week).

TABLE 1

Semester Grade Point Average by College Student Employment Category by Group

Representative Group
College Student Employment Categories

Year	Semester	Part Time on Campus	Part Time Off Campus	Full Time Off Campus	Unemployed
Year One	F 80	2.12	2.34	2.15	2.52
	S 81	2.29	2.34	2.05	2.50
Year Two	F 81	2.37	2.54	2.14	2.69
	S 82	2.52	2.51	2.58	2.65
Year Three	F 82	2.63	2.54	2.52	2.79
	S 83	2.56	2.78	2.49	2.82
Year Four*	F 83	2.80		2.42	2.63
	S 84	2.81		2.52	2.72

*work site for part-time employment was not determined.

Black Group
College Student Employment Categories

Year	Semester	Part Time On Campus	Part Time Off Campus	Full Time Off Campus	Unemployed
Year One	F 80	1.66	1.68	1.82	1.87
	S 81	1.81	1.62	1.75	1.95
Year Two	F 81	2.01	2.07	2.27	2.18
	S 82	2.09	1.94	1.40	2.12
Year Three	F 82	2.15	2.34	1.67	2.24
	S 83	2.16	2.01	1.35	2.35
Year Four*	F 83	2.32		1.92	2.12
	S 84	2.47		2.24	2.45

*work site for part-time employment was not determined.

Black Group

The freshman year was a difficult year academically for black students whether they were employed or not. Although unemployed students had a higher GPA both semesters than students who were employed part-time or full-time, the Year One grade point average across college student employment categories was lower than 2.00, the minimum required for graduation (see Table 1).

After the freshman year, many students in the Black Group who did not transfer or become a nonstudent appeared to have adjusted to the academic environment and expectations of a large college campus. The average GPA for all four student employment categories increased to above 2.00, with students employed full-time earning the highest GPA in the fall semester of Year Two. However, spring semester of Year Two appears to have been a critical one for students employed off-campus, particularly for those with full-time employment. The GPA for students working full-time plummeted from 2.27 to 1.40, and did not recover in Year Three, where it remained below 2.0 both semesters.

Question 7. Is there a relationship between students' employment status and their progression through the degree program?

The "four year degree" rests on the assumption that a student will successfully complete an average of 15 credits per semester for 8 semesters, when the degree program consists of 120 credits. In none of the employment categories did students studied for this report successfully complete an average of 15 credits a semester. However, students who were unemployed typically made faster progress through their program than did students who worked part-time or full-time. The full impact of this observation can be felt when one examines the discrepancy between the number of credit hours attempted each semester, and the number successfully earned, across college student employment categories. See Appendix A for a full breakdown of credit hours attempted and earned, and the discrepancy between them.

Representative Group

Unemployed students in the Representative Group both attempted and earned more credit hours, on the average, for the first five semesters than students who were juggling employment and academic demands. Not surprisingly, students employed full-time (i.e., for more than 20 hours a week) attempted and earned fewer credits each semester than students in the other employment categories. By the sixth semester (spring of Year Three), however, the discrepancy between credit hours attempted and earned had decreased substantially across student employment categories.

Black Group

Students in the Black Group both attempted and earned fewer credits their first year than did students in the Representative Group (see Appendix A). Unemployed students in Year One were more successful than employed students in earning the number of credits they attempted. After the first year there was no clear pattern between college student employment and progression through the degree program for the Black Group. The data suggest, however, that unemployment did not seem to affect positively black students' academic progress. The data also suggest that full-time employment in Year Three was very harmful to a black student's ability to successfully complete the number of credits attempted. Remember that their grade point averages for this year were below the minimum needed to graduate.

Question 8. Is there a relationship between the location of students' employment (i.e., on/off campus) and retention?

As is described in more depth in MLS Research Report #1: A DESCRIPTIVE OVERVIEW, each year at the MLS contact (spring semester) students were classified as either Persister (at UMCP), Graduate, Transfer, Nonstudent, Uncontacted, Refused, or Dropped. For this report, Uncontacted includes students who were dropped from the study and those who refused further participation as well as students who were uncontactable that spring.

Representative Group

Table 2 presents, for each year, the subsequent year's enrollment status across college student employment categories for the Representative Group. Although the differences are not large, students who worked part-time on campus showed a slightly greater tendency than students in other employment categories to reenroll at UMCP or to have graduated by the following year's MLS contact. This pattern holds for the four years in which college student employment was studied.

TABLE 2

Subsequent Year's Enrollment Status Across College Student Employment Categories Each Year, by Group

Representative Group
College Student Employment Categories

Subsequent Enrollment Status	Part Time On Campus %	Part Time Off Campus %	Full Time Off Campus %	Unemployed %
Year One				
Persisted	78	74	68	75
Transferred	7	9	16	10
Nonstudent	7	6	3	3
Uncontacted	7	11	13	11
Year Two				
Persisted	87	78	71	77
Transferred	3	8	8	7
Nonstudent	3	8	4	8
Uncontacted	7	6	17	7
Year Three				
Persisted	89	87	78	88
Graduated	2	1	0	2
Transferred	2	0	7	2
Nonstudent	0	3	11	2
Uncontacted	7	9	4	5
Year Four*				
Persisted	33		28	25
Graduated	50		38	52
Transferred	1		0	2
Nonstudent	3		5	0
Uncontacted	14		30	20

*work site for part-time employment not determined in Year Four.

Black Group
College Student Employment Categories

Subsequent Enrollment Status	Part Time On Campus %	Part Time Off Campus %	Full Time Off Campus %	Unemployed %
Year One				
Persisted	54	50	61	60
Transferred	24	22	17	17
Nonstudent	11	8	6	8
Uncontacted	11	20	17	14
Year Two				
Persisted	79	60	50	74
Transferred	6	8	10	8
Nonstudent	0	8	20	7
Uncontacted	15	24	20	12
Year Three				
Persisted	72	84	50	63
Graduated	0	0	0	0
Transferred	12	0	0	2
Nonstudent	5	5	20	7
Uncontacted	12	10	30	27
Year Four*				
Persisted	34		27	25
Graduated	31		40	38
Transferred	5		7	12
Nonstudent	3		13	0
Uncontacted	26		13	25

*work site for part-time employment not determined in Year Four.

Black Group

In the Black Group there does not appear to be a relationship between college student employment and students' enrollment status the following year (see Table 2). Students who worked full-time off campus or who were unemployed in their freshman year were slightly more likely to persist at UMCP the next year, while students with part-time jobs were more likely to transfer to another institution the following year.

However, in Year Two, students who worked part-time on campus or who were unemployed were most likely to persist at UMCP, while students who worked full-time were most likely to become nonstudents the following year.

Only half of the black students with full-time jobs in Years Two or Three persisted at UMCP the following year. Twenty percent became nonstudents. The high percentage of these students employed full-time who were uncontactable by MLS the following year contributes to the lack of clarity concerning their subsequent enrollment status.

By Year Four, there were virtually no differences in the subsequent enrollment of black students across employment categories: 64% of students employed part-time in Year Four persisted or had graduated by the next year's MLS contact. This was true for 67% of the black students working full-time in Year Four and for 63% of unemployed black students.

III. SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

This section summarizes the findings presented in Section II and discusses their implications for the University community.

The extent of college student employment

The extent of employment among students at The University of Maryland College Park is great. Evidence presented in this report demonstrates that after the freshman year the majority of students studied by MLS had, in addition to their academic demands, some kind of employment. The proportion of students with part-time or full-time employment increased as students progressed through their academic program. In both the Representative and Black Groups, in the fourth year approximately 75% of the students studied were employed.

Sex differences in college student employment patterns

In the Representative Group, there were differences in longitudinal patterns of employment for male and female students. In each of the years in which college student employment was studied, more than half of the males in the Representative Group had some kind of employment, while it was not until the third year that the majority of women in the Representative Group were employed, either part-time or full-time.

Within the Black Group, there were no sex differences in yearly employment rates. Less than half of the males and females in the Black Group were employed their first year at UMCP. The rate increased each year, for both sexes, until in Year Four almost 80% of the black students studied had part-time or full-time jobs.

Student employment is not necessarily continuous. A student may have a job one year and not the next, or may wait until after the freshman year to become employed. Overall, less than one student in five did not have a job at some point during their *first three academic years* at UMCP.

Employment and residence status

The fact that in the Representative Group there are fewer *un*employed students among commuters than among resident students has implications for the amount of time a commuting student has available to spend on campus. With increasing evidence of the connection between student involvement with faculty and staff beyond the classroom setting, and retention (Tinto, 1987), students who both live and work off campus may be seen as being at risk of attrition. One way of helping commuters spend more non-classroom time with faculty and staff is by trying to place them in on-campus jobs which involve interactions with faculty and staff. Efforts should be made, particularly in the first two years of a student's college career, to inform commuting students both of the particular value of *on-campus* employment and of the employment opportunities that are available.

The fact that on-campus jobs were more likely to be held by resident students and off-campus jobs by commuters is distressing. This pattern was true for both the Representative and Black Groups. Within the pattern, the proportion of students working on campus who were campus residents was higher for the Black Group than for the Representative Group. In other words, it was more unlikely for a commuting black student to hold a job on campus than it was for a commuting student in the Representative Group to do so.

Further study needs to be made of reasons why black commuters tend not to work on campus. Are they paid higher wages for a similar job off campus? The University's employers should take steps to insure that the wages for on-campus employment are competitive with comparable jobs off campus. Creative use of job perquisites should also be considered as a means of attracting students to on-campus employment.

Do student commuters, particularly black students, lack information on job availability, information to which campus residents may have easier access? The University should examine how on-campus jobs are made known to students. For example, if many jobs are advertised primarily through word of mouth, there is a high possibility of discrimination against black students by virtue of their smaller numbers on this predominantly white campus. To offer an alternative to word of mouth advertising, the classified section of the DIAMONDBACK could be set up clearly to distinguish on-campus from off-campus jobs. In addition, the Office of Commuter Affairs and the Office of Minority Student Education, among others, could collaborate with the Job Referral Service to inform non-resident students of on-campus employment opportunities.

Do commuters, particularly black commuters, perceive a more supportive work environment off campus? Our data show that black students who held jobs on campus tended to report a higher degree of involvement in their work experience than Representative Group students with on-campus jobs. However, it may be that black commuters who take jobs off campus do so because they do not perceive the campus as a comfortable place. Recent reports of studies of the "chilly climate" perceived by black students on predominantly white campuses reinforce this supposition. If this is true, offering on-campus jobs to black commuters is all the more important: on-campus jobs can be a vehicle for combatting the perception of a "chilly climate" and for helping black commuting students become more closely linked to and increasingly involved with the campus community.

Students' involvement in their on-campus jobs

The low degree of involvement reported by students in their on-campus work, particularly in the early part of their college career, indicates a need on the part of University employers and supervisors to consider student employment on campus an intrinsic part of the educational experience, and to create a work environment that promotes student involvement and learning on the job. To do so is particularly crucial in light of the increasing value the University community is placing on improving the quality of the undergraduate experience. Students who invest psychological as well as physical energy in interpersonal interactions and/or in the work itself are thought to have a greater potential for development through the work experience than students who are only minimally involved (Astin, 1984; Mortimer, 1984). The decrease over the years in the number of students reporting only minimal involvement in their on-campus work experience may be related to the increased complexity and interest in the work itself as students' skills develop. In jobs which are not cognitively demanding, this change may reflect an increase in the quality of interactions with a supervisor or with fellow student employees.

The number of students who report a low degree of involvement in their on-campus jobs their freshman year warrants attention. The work environment is a setting in which student development can and should occur. For example, students hired to do routine office work such as duplication, collation, and/or stapling, may find the job less boring if they are not working in isolation. On the other hand, students who are hired for data entry and other routine tasks which nevertheless require concentration need a designated place in which they can take a break and perhaps socialize before resuming their tasks. Whatever the job description, employers and supervisors should be aware of the reinforcing effects of recognizing a student's skills development and conscientiousness on the job, and give such feedback to their student employees.

Student employment and academic performance

Despite the positive links between on-campus employment and retention, our data show that students who were unemployed earned higher grade point averages their first two years at UMCP than students who had jobs. These results may imply a time management problem. There is a great deal of fluctuation during a semester in the amount of time a course requires of its students. Students who are trying to balance academic responsibilities and employment demands may need help in setting priorities, and in estimating the amount of time each demand requires. Further, an examination of students' fluctuations of energy during a 24 hour period can help them in scheduling and managing their time. Campus employers and/or supervisors may want to consider requiring, or strongly advising, students who want on-campus employment during their first or second year to participate in time management workshops. Orientation may be a good setting to advise incoming students that time management is a particularly essential skill for students who are both working and earning a degree.

Student employment and progression through the academic program

The number of students employed on or off campus who ended a semester having earned an average of one credit less than the number they were attempting may indicate a need for academic advising to take into account a student's employment. Black freshmen and

sophomores appeared to have a particularly difficult time judging how many credits they could successfully complete given the competing demands of their academic work and their employment.

Students who were employed full-time off campus were most at risk of not progressing steadily through their degree programs. Long range, the competing demands of coursework and employment appeared to be detrimental to the academic success and academic goal achievement for these students. These students might benefit by using the academic support services available on campus to help them both increase their efficient management of time in general and use their study time more effectively. Thus, it is particularly important that academic advisors of students employed full-time off campus be aware of the specific academic support services and programs available on campus, and be able to refer students to such services and programs. Agencies which offer support services and programs should insure that academic advisors are on their mailing list in order to help advisors stay informed of the occurrence of (and students' need for) support programs and workshops.

Furthermore, advisors of students who are employed full-time could help these students consider taking fewer credits, or help them determine if there are alternatives which might decrease the amount of time spent each week in employment. For example, advisors might ask these students if they have exhausted their financial aid options. Advisors might emphasize, where relevant, the extent to which over-employed students are jeopardizing their educational goals, and refer these students to the Counseling Center for some help with setting priorities and problem-solving.

Student employment and retention

For the Representative Group, the observation of Astin (1975, 1984), that college students who are employed *part-time on campus* tend to have higher retention rates than students in other college student employment categories, was consistent with evidence presented in this report. In the three years in which work site and work hours were examined (Years One, Two and Three of MLS), of the four employment categories studied, a greater proportion of students in the Representative Group who worked part-time on campus in a given year returned to UMCP the following year.

For the Black Group, evidence of a relationship between on-campus employment and subsequent retention was not as clear. It must be kept in mind, however, that the actual numbers of the Black Group are much smaller than the Representative Group (particularly by the third year of the study), and generalizations should be made with caution.

Nevertheless, for a substantial number of students at UMCP, a relationship appeared to exist between on-campus employment and retention. This relationship would be particularly important for the University to keep in mind when considering budgeting for college student employment. On-campus student employment could be a creative and effective way to help students gain more from their college experience and hence be more likely to persist at UMCP until graduation.

IV. CONCLUSION

This report offers evidence that there are large numbers of college students at UMCP who are employed, and that the rate of student employment increases with time. Clearly college student employment is an issue which deserves University attention.

Evidence in this report supports, in part, the contention that there is a relationship between on-campus employment and subsequent retention, and suggests that the University should make a systematic and concerted effort not only to attract students to on-campus jobs but also to create a work environment which stimulates college student involvement in the work experience, and hence—directly or indirectly—in their college experience.

The data show an imbalance between residents and commuters, with more residents holding on-campus jobs and more commuters working off campus. Making an effort to recruit commuting students to on-campus employment options would increase the amount of time these students could spend in the campus community. The benefits of on-campus employment might include an increase in students' involvement with this campus as well as with their own development.

This report further suggests that there is a need for members of the University community, particularly academic advisors, to help students who are employed recognize the need to achieve a balance between the demands of their jobs and their academic work in order to insure a steady progression through their academic program.

With careful consideration on the part of members of the University community, the benefits of college student employment could be increased and the perils lessened. The first step toward this goal is awareness both of the extent of college student employment and of the possible positive *and* negative effects of such employment on the overall college experience.

The Maryland Longitudinal Study (MLS) is a research undertaking of the Division of Student Affairs at The University of Maryland College Park. A significant number of Student Affairs staff have been involved in the study since its inception. A Steering Committee appointed by the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs has been responsible for the methodology, data collection and management of this project. These individuals are listed in Appendix A of the MLS report entitled **The Maryland Longitudinal Study—A Descriptive Overview: The Study's Purpose, Goals, Features, Participants, and Design.**

END NOTE

[1] If you have not already received MLS Research Report #1: **A Descriptive Overview**, write: Maryland Longitudinal Study, The University of Maryland, 2108 North Administration Building, College Park, Maryland 20742.

APPENDIX A

Credit Hours Attempted and Earned Each Semester Across Student Employment Categories, by Group

	Representative Group College Student Employment Categories				Black Group College Student Employment Categories			
	Part Time On Campus	Part Time Off Campus	Full Time Off Campus	Unemployed	Part Time On Campus	Part Time Off Campus	Full Time Off Campus	Unemployed
YEAR ONE								
Fall								
Attempted	12.3	13.1	12.6	13.6	11.7	11.7	11.6	12.3
Earned	10.8	12.0	10.9	12.7	9.5	8.9	9.3	10.5
Discrepancy	1.5	1.1	1.7	.9	2.2	2.8	2.3	1.8
Spring								
Attempted	13.1	13.4	11.7	14.2	11.5	12.3	11.3	13.0
Earned	12.1	12.4	10.6	13.3	9.9	9.6	9.7	11.2
Discrepancy	1.2	1.0	1.1	.9	1.6	2.7	1.6	1.8
YEAR TWO								
Fall								
Attempted	13.6	13.5	12.7	14.5	12.6	13.4	12.8	13.2
Earned	12.6	12.6	10.9	13.9	11.2	11.5	12.4	11.8
Discrepancy	1.0	.9	1.8	.6	1.4	1.9	.4	1.4
Spring								
Attempted	13.9	13.1	12.4	14.4	13.4	12.8	11.7	13.1
Earned	13.0	12.4	11.6	13.8	11.8	10.7	9.0	11.8
Discrepancy	.9	.7	.8	.6	1.6	2.1	2.7	1.3
YEAR THREE								
Fall								
Attempted	14.0	13.4	12.7	14.6	13.7	12.9	13.3	13.1
Earned	13.0	12.9	12.7	14.4	12.6	12.2	9.7	12.5
Discrepancy	1.0	.5	0	.2	1.1	.7	3.6	.6
Spring								
Attempted	13.7	13.6	11.7	13.5	14.1	11.8	10.7	13.2
Earned	13.4	13.5	11.4	13.5	13.0	10.1	7.9	12.8
Discrepancy	.3	.1	.3	0	1.1	1.7	2.8	.4
YEAR FOUR*								
Fall								
Attempted		13.4	11.8	13.8		13.9	11.9	13.0
Earned		13.4	11.4	13.6		13.2	11.2	11.7
Discrepancy		0	.4	.2		.7	.7	1.3
Spring								
Attempted		12.9	11.4	13.4		13.8	12.9	14.1
Earned		13.3	11.7	13.2		13.4	12.9	13.2
Discrepancy				.2		.4	0	.9

***Work site not determined for part-time employment in Year Four.**

Note: If completed satisfactorily, courses that are taken pass/fail, that are graduate level courses taken in the undergraduate years, and that are taken at other University of Maryland campuses (such as University College) are counted as credit hours *earned*, but not as credit hours *attempted*. This may be an explanation for why the figures for credits earned are higher than credits attempted, in the spring semester of Year Four.

REFERENCES

Astin, A. W. (1975). *Preventing students from dropping out.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Astin, A. W. (1984). Student involvement: A developmental theory for higher education. *Journal of College Student Personnel, 25,* 194-203.

Mortimer, K. P., Astin, A. W., Blake, J. H., Bowen, H. R., Gamson, Z. F., Hodgkinson, H. L., & Lee, B. (1984. October 24) Text of the new report on excellence in undergraduate education. *The Chronicle of Higher Education,* pp. 35-49.

Tinto, V. (1987). *Leaving college: Rethinking the causes and cures of student attrition.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.